



Department of Justice

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XENIA BUSINESSMAN SENTENCED TO 12 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR SOCIAL SECURITY FRAUD

DAYTON, OHIO— John Harrison, age 48, of Xenia, was sentenced to twelve months in federal prison for Social Security Fraud for unlawfully collecting disability payments for seven years, even though he worked as an accountant throughout that period.

Gregory Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, and William Cotter, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Social Security Administration Office of Inspector General, Chicago Region, announced the sentence handed down by U.S. District Court Judge Walter H. Rice today. Harrison pleaded guilty in March, 2007 to one count of Social Security Fraud after collecting more than \$116,000 in Social Security Disability payments between 1998 until 2005.

According to a statement of facts filed with Harrison's plea agreement, he applied for Disability Insurance Benefits on or about September 29, 1998, falsely claiming that he had become incapacitated as a result of an automobile accident in 1994. Harrison claimed in his disability application that he was unable to work, drive a car, or exert himself in any way. Harrison also admitted to defrauding the U.S. Department of Education during the same time period by submitting false information on a student loan application for his daughter without her knowledge.

Harrison continued to claim that he was unable to work in interviews with Social Security Administration staff, submitting false reports to Social Security in which he claimed his condition had not changed, had in fact worsened, and that he was prevented from working because his was in constant, severe pain which incapacitated him. Social Security investigators determined that Harrison had actively worked as an accountant the entire time he collected disability benefits and had multiple clients and appointments outside of the home.

Harrison must serve a term of three years on supervised release at the conclusion of his prison sentence and complete 200 hours of community service. He was ordered to pay \$123,135 in restitution to the Social Security Administration and the U.S. Department of Education.

"Financial crimes against the government have far-reaching effects on the community," Lockhart said. "The citizens who are truly deserving of Social Security benefits must be protected from those who make false claims in order to secure payments to which they are not legally entitled."

Lockhart commended the efforts of the Social Security agents who investigated the case, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Laura Clemmens, who prosecuted the case.

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